

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 45

By Cobb J

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Sergeant John Michael Sullivan of Hixson.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, one such courageous Volunteer, Sergeant John Michael Sullivan of A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado, died while pursuing freedom and democracy for the people of Iraq; and

WHEREAS, like thousands of others of this Nation's sons and daughters, Sergeant Sullivan did not shrink from serving in a combat zone, believing in the justice of the cause to protect our national security and liberty and to free the Iraqi people from the chains of injustice; and

WHEREAS, a beloved father, husband, son, and brother, Sergeant Sullivan now lies at rest in the sacred ground of America, which he loved so dearly and gave his life to protect; and

WHEREAS, by displaying the patriotism and honor for which he was well known, John Sullivan was the embodiment of the American hero; he believed deeply in America and the virtue of its cause, never hesitating to sacrifice himself to defend his beloved Nation, its citizens, or a fellow serviceman; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Sullivan, a graduate of Soddy-Daisy High School, enjoyed a life lived to the fullest, boldly rising to whatever challenge presented itself; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from high school in 2003, John Sullivan joined the United States Army and spent much of his enlistment in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, during his first tour in Iraq, Sergeant Sullivan and several other members of his unit were hit by an improvised explosive device; his injuries prompted the military to offer him a Purple Heart medal, which he turned down so that he could return to his unit and serve another tour of duty, a testament to his bravery, integrity, and commitment to his brother-in-arms'; and

WHEREAS, on December 30, 2006, Sergeant John Sullivan volunteered to work in the stead of an ill friend; tragically, he was killed by an explosive device while on duty in Sadr City in Baghdad; and

WHEREAS, well-known for his dedication to his compatriots, Sergeant Sullivan planned to re-enlist when his initial enlistment ended, and he desired to return to Iraq for a third tour, so that he could continue to serve with his friends; and

WHEREAS, this superlative soldier won the hearts of many, was deeply devoted to his family, and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he will be dearly missed by his beloved wife, Michele; his newborn son, John Michael Sullivan, Jr., who was born the day after his father died; his mother, Debbie Sullivan; his step-father, Charlie Beavers; his grandparents, Bobbie and John Sullivan; and a host of friends and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, inspired and humbled by the selfless actions of Sergeant John Sullivan, the administration of Tennessee Temple University has graciously extended to John Sullivan, Jr., a four-year scholarship to the university, a fitting expression of the administration's appreciation of Sergeant Sullivan's supreme sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, this valiant Tennessean leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a man of great courage and gallantry, Sergeant Sullivan lost his life while serving his country and the cause in which he believed, and for that sacrifice, he deserves

proper recognition; as a member of the United States Army, he proudly continued an essential tradition of American society: the concept of the dedicated soldier; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Sullivan's dedication to excellence and his love for his family, his fellow soldiers, and his country, as exemplified by his valiant defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our Nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly should pause to remember the singular patriotism, courage, and commitment to duty of this exceptional soldier and human being, the late Sergeant John Sullivan, United States Army, whose loss is mourned by a grateful nation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Sergeant John Michael Sullivan, a man of impeccable character, limitless courage, and stalwart commitment to the defense of his Nation as a member of the United States Army, reflecting fondly upon his bravery and dedication to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and friends of Sergeant Sullivan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.